



Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor

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STATE OF ILLINOIS RELEASES THE ILLINOIS FALL COLOR REPORT AND FIVE NEW ROAD TRIP ITINERARIES HIGHLIGHTING THE BEST WAYS TO SEE AND EXPERIENCE THE SEASON

New itineraries include places to stay, small businesses to shop and where to see the leaves change across all regions of Illinois

SPRINGFIELD –With fall now underway, the Illinois Office of Tourism has released the 2021 Fall Color Report as a helpful guide to help residents and visitors know the best time to spot fall foliage in all regions across the state. The Illinois Office of Tourism (IOT) releases the Illinois Fall Color Report annually in the fall in partnership with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to help residents plan drives and scenic getaways throughout the state. Along with the Fall Color Report, IOT has also released new road trip itineraries highlighting incredible fall experiences around Illinois. Each itinerary features unique places to stay, authentic small businesses to discover, places to eat and one-of-a-kind outdoor adventures among the state’s changing leaves.

“The annual Fall Color Report offers travelers yet another reason to book their trip to Illinois and is the latest in a series of efforts by our administration to boost tourism activity in Illinois,” **said Sylvia Garcia, Acting Director of the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.** “We hope visitors will use both the Illinois Fall Color report and new road trip itineraries as helpful resources to plan a trip to Illinois and take in some of the state’s most scenic views, while stimulating foot traffic at businesses, attractions and hotels that are vital to our tourism economy.”

The annual Fall Color Report is updated weekly, offering Illinoisans and visitors alike a real-time look at where to spot fall foliage during peak times in the following four regions of Illinois:

- Chicago & Beyond (Chicago and surrounding areas) - Second week of October
- Great Rivers Country (Western border of Illinois) - Second week of October
- Land of Lincoln (Central Illinois)-Middle of October
- Trails to Adventure (Southeast Illinois) - Last week of October

The newly released fall road trip itineraries were created to expose the beautiful sights and attractions unique to Illinois. Itinerary highlights include:

- Frights & Delights in Illinois-Featuring local haunts in the southwest region of the state like the McPike Mansion and Alton Hauntings Tours, winner of a 2021 Tripadvisor Traveler’s Choice Award.
- Tour of Spookiness and Charm from Rockford to Galena-Highlighting scenic fall sights like the changing leaves at Anderson Japanese Gardens in Rockford, sliding into the season on the Alpine Slide at Chestnut Mountain Resort in Galena and taking a ghost tour through Historic Main Street in Galena.
- Great Pumpkin Country-Showcasing some of Central Illinois’ fun-filled agritourism destinations for

families to enjoy like the Great Pumpkin Patch in Arthur, meeting friendly reindeer at Hardy's Reindeer Ranch in Rantoul and tasting homemade fudge at Flesor's Candy Kitchen in Tuscola.

- Haunted Chicago-Highlighting some surprisingly spooky stops, stays and views around the city like Historic Water Tower, kayaking along the Chicago River, strolling through Lincoln Park Zoo and a stay at The Drake Hotel.

All fall itineraries can be found [here](#).

"Illinois has so much to offer travelers year-round, but especially in the fall and the annual Fall Color Report is a handy tool that visitors can access to plan an unforgettable getaway this season to our state," said **Karla Flannery, Director of the Illinois Office of Tourism**. "Working with IDNR, the Illinois Office of Tourism releases the Report to help our visitors plan a trip to see incredible fall foliage and in turn experience more of the unique communities and destinations we have to offer."

The Illinois Office of Tourism also recently released the fall/winter issue of Enjoy Illinois magazine offering Illinois trip inspiration for the colder months to come. The new magazine issue, which highlights Chicago Botanic Garden in Glencoe on its cover, features small businesses in the Illinois Made program to visit, rustic lodging around the state, Illinois' top spots for cozy comfort food and much more. To subscribe to the free travel magazine, view it online or download it digitally, [click here](#).

"Illinois state parks are great places to visit any time of the year, and our parks are particularly beautiful this time of year thanks to the colors of fall," said **Illinois Department of Natural Resources Director Colleen Callahan**. "Take your family on a fall colors drive or hike and enjoy the show in the woodlands, along the river bluffs and lakes and on the trails and hills of breathtaking state parks."

Illinois has recently reignited leisure tourism activity with the launch of the Time for Me to Drive campaign. The campaign, which ran from May-September, leveraged consumer trends indicating a preference for road trips, as a result of the pandemic. In addition to the Fall Color Report, the Pritzker administration has focused on sustaining tourism activity during non-peak travel times, the fall and winter months, by launching a tourism recovery fund. The \$10 million Tourism Attractions and Festivals Grant opportunity is now open and accepting applications from communities, tourism agencies and developers to help launch new festivals, attractions and events to help increase in and out of state visitorship in Illinois.

To view the Fall Color Report and for more information on the road trip itineraries, visit EnjoyIllinois.com.

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